

MINUTES
SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
QUARTERLY COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, September 11, 2024

3:00 p.m.

Ozaukee Nonprofit Center
2360 Dakota Drive
Grafton, WI 53024

Meeting Occurred in Person and Virtually via Video and Telephone Conference

Present:

Commissioners:

Charles Colman, Chairperson
James Dwyer, Vice Chairperson
Donna Brown-Martin
Michael Crowley
Katrina Hanson
John Holloway
Dewayne Johnson
Mary Knipper
Amy Maurer
Natalia Minkel-Dumit
Robert Pitts
Jeffrey Schleif
Peggy Shumway
Eric Stelter
David Stroik

Excused:

Thomas Buestrin
Priscilla Coggs-Jones
Brian Holt
Michael Maistelman

Staff:

Stephanie Hacker	Executive Director
Benjamin McKay	Deputy Director
Elizabeth Larsen	Director of Administration
Eric Lynde	Chief Special Projects Planner
Ryan Hoel	Chief Transportation Engineer
Ethan Johnson	Senior Transportation Planner
Alina Panasiuk	Accounting/HR Specialist
James Zehner	Communications Specialist

Guests:

Cory Mason	Mayor, City of Racine
David Bogdala	Mayor, City of Kenosha
Samantha Kerkman	County Executive, Kenosha County

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ROLL CALL

Chairperson Colman called the 288th meeting of the Commission to order at 3:00 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present. Chairperson Colman indicated for the record that Commissioners Buestrin, Coggs-Jones, Holt, and Maistelman had asked to be excused.

OFFICIAL SEATING OF RACINE COUNTY COMMISSIONER TREVOR JUNG

Ms. Shumway introduced Mr. Trevor Jung as the Commission's new Racine County Commissioner. Ms. Shumway noted that Mr. Jung was appointed by Governor Evers. Ms. Shumway then noted Mr. Jung serves as the Transit and Mobility Director for RYDE Racine, overseeing the City of Racine public transit system. Mr. Jung holds a bachelor's degree in urban studies from the University Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He has served on the City of Racine Common Council and chaired the Transit Commission and has served on the boards of the Racine County Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, and All Aboard Wisconsin.

Mr. Stroik made a motion, seconded by Mr. Colman, and carried unanimously, to formally seat Mr. Trevor Jung as a Commissioner representing Racine County on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

Mr. Jung thanked the Commissioners for welcoming him to the Commission and is looking forward to being a part of this group to help move the Region forward.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JUNE 12, 2024, ANNUAL COMMISSION MEETING

On a motion by Mr. Schleif, seconded by Mr. Stroik, and carried unanimously, the minutes of the June 12, 2024, Annual Commission Meeting were approved as published.

UPDATE ON COMMISSION STAFF ASSISTANCE WITH A PASSENGER RAIL STUDY FOR THE KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR

Chairperson Colman asked Mr. Eric Lynde of the Commission staff to present the update. Mr. Lynde presented an overview of the passenger rail study for the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor that was initiated by the City of Racine.

During Mr. Lynde's presentation, the following questions and comments were made.

In response to a comment by Mr. Colman, Mr. Lynde stated the corridor is currently single track and the study will be looking at infrastructure improvements that may be needed. He further stated there may need to be double tracking in the corridor to accommodate passenger trains.

Mr. Jung proceeded with a portion of the presentation.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Pitts, Mr. Jung stated the project cost is going to be determined as the study progresses. The cost of the project will depend on service concepts and station locations.

In response to an additional inquiry by Mr. Pitts, Mr. Jung stated there was a \$5 million appropriation from Senator Baldwin that was passed through Congress to fund the study.

Mr. Jung clarified for Mr. Pitts that the Federal government has committed to the study, but not the project. An application for Federal grant funds would need to be submitted and approved for the project to move

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forward. Mr. Lynde noted the Federal funding programs that are being reviewed include the Corridor ID program and the New Starts program.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Pitts, concerning the make-up of the Steering Committee, Mr. Lynde explained the membership of the Committee, noting that it is not a formal body created by an intergovernmental agreement. This Committee could become more permanent depending upon the direction of the study; however, at this time the Committee provides input and guides key decision points of the study.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Colman, Mr. Lynde stated Commission staff is providing oversight services to the City of Racine and reviewing consultant deliverables.

Mr. Johnson commented that he is pleased to be discussing this issue and referenced Mr. Jung's statement about the project's potential contribution to the economic vitality of the Southeastern Wisconsin Region. Mr. Johnson stated clear and timely communication will be important throughout the project. Mr. Johnson also commented that if this project goes beyond the initial study, communication about potential funding sources for the project will be important.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Maurer, Mr. Lynde responded that transit ridership has been down in general since the pandemic.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Holloway, Mr. Lynde stated that a cost benefit analysis will be conducted as part of the study.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Lynde stated that the track is owned by Union Pacific and there is not an agreement to operate passenger rail in that corridor currently in place. Mr. Jung noted that it is anticipated there will be less freight traffic on this line in the future.

In response to an additional inquiry by Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Jung stated that the distance between the Union Pacific rail corridor and IH 94 is about 10 miles. Mr. McKay noted that it is about a 20-minute drive.

Ms. Maurer commented that much of the economic growth in Kenosha and Racine Counties has been in the IH 94 corridor, and there would be a gap between IH 94 and the Union Pacific rail line. Mr. Lynde noted that the Commission has conducted analyses at the request of the City of Racine showing that improving connections between the City and IH 94 would be very difficult. Mr. Jung noted that economic growth in Kenosha and Racine Counties has occurred around a transportation investment that was made in IH 94, and that a transportation investment, in this case in passenger rail, could have economic benefits for the Cities of Kenosha and Racine.

Ms. Kerkman thanked Mr. Lynde for attending the Kenosha County Board meeting and acknowledged the 2005 study. She stated that it is important to have elected officials in the three counties that are most impacted by the study included in the conversation and noted that the Commission is going to be a facilitator of this conversation going forward. She stated that it is important to remember that the study is using federal funds, but those are still taxpayer dollars and that is why she is passionate about this effort. She further indicated that she hopes to have conversations with the Mayor of Racine and appreciated speaking with Mr. Jung following a Kenosha County Board meeting.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Schleif, Ms. Hacker stated that it is the Commission's role to bring county and local governments into the conversation about this effort and recognized that the steering committee and technical working group helping to guide this effort may need to evolve over time. Mr. Pitts stated he would like to have County representatives on the steering committee.

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CONSIDERATION OF TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENTS (RESOLUTION NO. 2024-12)

Chairperson Colman asked the Commission to consider adoption of Resolution No. 2024-12, which is an amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2023-2026. Mr. McKay presented Resolution 2024-12, amending the 2023-2026 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He indicated there are four changes to existing projects, one project to be removed, and 14 new projects to be amended into the TIP. He stated that these projects were approved by the Commission's Advisory Committees on Transportation System Planning and Programming for the Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine Urbanized Areas.

There being no questions or comments, on a motion by Mr. Dwyer to approve Resolution No. 2024-12, seconded by Mr. Crowley, and carried by a vote on 16 ayes and 0 nays, Resolution No. 2024-12 was approved (copy of Resolution 2024-12 attached to Official Minutes).

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENT TO THE REGIONAL WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Amendment to the Village of Jackson and Environs sanitary sewer service area (Resolution No. 2024-13)

Chairperson Colman asked the Commission to consider Resolution No. 2024-13, noting that the Resolution would revise the Village of Jackson and Environs sanitary sewer service area. He asked Mr. McKay to present this Resolution.

Mr. McKay noted that the proposed amendment was reviewed in detail at the August 6, 2024, Planning and Research Committee meeting. He stated the Planning and Research Committee recommended adoption of the amendment by the full Commission. He then provided a brief overview. During the overview Mr. McKay explained that one area is proposed to be added to the existing sewer service area. He noted that the subject area to be added is 8.7 acres in size and proposed to be developed for commercial use. He also noted that the extension of sewers to serve new development in portions of the subject area with secondary environmental corridors comprised of 1-percent-annual-probability floodplain and wetlands is not permitted.

There being no discussion, on a motion by Mr. Schleif and seconded by Ms. Minkel-Dumit, Resolution No. 2024-13 was adopted by a vote of 16 ayes and 0 nays (Copy of Resolution No. 2024-13 is attached to the Official Minutes).

TREASURER'S REPORT

Chairperson Colman called on Mr. Stroik to present the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Stroik noted that a copy of the Treasurer's Report had been provided to all Commissioners for review prior to the meeting and called attention to the following items:

1. Based upon disbursements through July 28, 2024, it is projected that total disbursements for the year will approximate \$9.94 million. Revenues are projected at about \$9.67 million, exclusive of interest income and miscellaneous revenues.

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2. The Commission's Reserves Policy indicates a minimum reserve amount of \$5,092,110, with a maximum reserve amount of \$10,058,220. The audited cash and cash equivalents at end of year 2023 are \$6,053,254.
3. As of July 28, 2024, the Commission had in investments and cash on hand approximately \$5.45 million. Just over \$4.3 million was invested in the State of Wisconsin Local Government Pooled Investment Fund. As of July 28, 2024, that fund was yielding 5.45 percent interest. Other funds are held in savings, checking, and certificate of deposit accounts at several banks.

There being no discussion, on a motion by Mr. Pitts, seconded by Ms. Minkel-Dumit, and carried unanimously, the Treasurer's Report for the period ending July 28, 2024, was approved (copy of the Treasurer's Report is attached to the Official Minutes).

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning and Research Committee

Chairperson Colman asked Mr. Crowley to present the Planning and Research Committee report. Mr. Crowley noted that the report had been provided to all Commissioners prior to the meeting. He noted that the Planning and Research Committee had met once since the Commission's Quarterly meeting on June 12, 2024.

On August 6, 2024, the Committee took the following actions:

1. Reviewed and recommended approval of a proposed amendment to the Regional Water Quality Management Plan to the full Commission
2. Received an update on the Chloride Impact Study
3. Received a demonstration of the Transportation Improvement Program eTIP

Executive Committee Report

Chairperson Colman noted that the Executive Committee report had been provided to all Commissioners prior to the meeting. He also noted that the Executive Committee met three times, on June 20, 2024, July 18, 2024, and August 15, 2024, since the previous Commission Meeting.

At two of the meetings, the Committee:

1. Reviewed and approved proposed contracts for planning work. Six contracts were approved in June and one contract was approved in August. The details of those contracts are attached to this report.

At all the meetings, the Committee:

2. Received a report outlining progress on key planning efforts being undertaken by the Commission in 2024. The most recent progress report is attached to this report.

At the June meeting, the Committee also took the following actions:

1. Reviewed and approved the Metropolitan Planning Area for Southeastern Wisconsin

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2. Discussed and approved the Commission business insurance renewal
3. Reviewed and approved a Commission vehicle purchase
4. Discussed and approved replacement network equipment and software
5. Discussed the Rockwood Drive lease for rental space
6. Received a presentation on the 1991 Strategic Plan
7. Reviewed draft goals and actions for the 2024 Strategy
8. Reviewed and approved disbursements for three financial periods: year 2024 Nos. 9, 10, and 11 for the period April 22, 2024, to June 2, 2024
9. Reviewed and approved the Statement of Projected Revenues and Expenditures for reporting period No. 11, 2024

At the July meeting the Committee took the following actions:

1. Reviewed and approved the 2023 Commission Audit Report
2. Reviewed and approved Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments
3. Discussed and approved the use of a leasing agent for Rockwood Drive rental space
4. Discussed the Commission's Intergovernmental & Public Relations Committee
5. Reviewed and approved the draft goals for the 2024 Strategy
6. Reviewed and approved the Statement of Projected Revenues and Expenditures for reporting period No. 13, 2024
7. Reviewed and approved disbursements for two financial periods: year 2024 Nos. 12, and 13 for the period June 3, 2024, to June 30, 2024

At the August meeting the Committee took the following actions:

1. Reviewed and discussed the 2024 Strategy draft actions
2. Approved a painting contractor for Rockwood Drive tenant space
3. Reviewed and approved the Statement of Projected Revenues and Expenditures for the reporting period No. 15, 2024.
4. Reviewed and approved disbursements for two financial periods: year 2024 Nos. 14 and 15, for the period July 1, 2024, to July 28, 2024

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CONSIDERATION OF THE 2024 STRATEGY WORKING MISSION, WORKING VISION, WORKING GOALS, AND WORKING ACTIONS

Chairperson Colman asked Ms. Hacker to initiate the discussion. Ms. Hacker reviewed the presentation titled: Working Mission, Vision, Goals, and Actions.

The following comments and questions were made during and after the presentation.

Mr. Johnson suggested that the first bullet on the People: Foster skilled, diplomatic, and engage employees PART ONE slide that reads “Continue to curate a robust hiring process,” be modified to read “Continue to curate a robust hiring and retention process.”

As the presentation concluded, Ms. Hacker stated that any issues with these goals and actions could be brought forward in this discussion, with the Mission and Vision statements having previously been brought forward for consideration.

Mr. Stroik commented on the wording “protect” and “safeguard” [the Region], implies the Region is under duress. He suggested the wording be changed to “supporting the Region.”

Mr. Stroik also stated that he often gets questions about what the Commission does. He suggested the common message should state, “The Commission provides accurate planning information to the decision makers of Southeastern Wisconsin.”

Mr. Stroik then noted that the actions sound like staff are being scolded or doing a poor job of personnel management, further noting the actions go into detail about how to fix how employees are treated. That could be said in a simpler statement without sounding like management is incompetent with respect to staff.

Ms. Hacker stated that she will work to make these changes.

Mr. Johnson stated he feels there is good information, but the actions could be more concise.

Mr. Holloway acknowledged that the Executive Committee has been working on the 2024 Strategy but would like updates on developing the Strategy to be shared with all Commissioners on a regular basis.

There being no additional discussion, on a motion by Mr. Stroik, seconded by Mr. Dwyer, staff was directed to incorporate the suggestions discussed into the working mission, vision, action and goals document, for further discussion at the Executive Committee meetings and for potential consideration at the December quarterly meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. McKay stated the September 19, 2024, the Executive Committee meeting will be held. Mr. Dwyer stated this would be his last Commission meeting as his term has expired. He expressed that he is grateful for the opportunity to have served as a member of the Commission.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, on a motion by Mr. Stroik, seconded by Mr. Dwyer, and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Hacker
Deputy Secretary

SH/BRM/EAL #274803